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CLARK COUNTY
WASHINGTON

N E W S R E L E A S E

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County sets comment period on proposed agreement with Cowlitz tribe

Vancouver, WA -- Clark County is now accepting public comment on a proposed agreement with the Cowlitz Indian Tribe to address a variety of potential developments at the La Center Junction along Interstate 5. The comment period continues until September 12.

The draft agreement calls for the tribe to fund services from local agencies and meet certain standards for public health, building, transportation, and environmental protection in the event that a commercial enterprise is developed under tribal jurisdiction. It also includes a plan for the tribe to make financial contributions to the community.

Although the tribe has not made a specific proposal, an application is pending before the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs to place land near the interchange into trust to prepare for development that would create economic opportunities for the tribe.

"In light of these special circumstances, we are working to foster a positive relationship between the county, the tribe, and the community," said Curt Wyrick, chief deputy prosecuting attorney.

"Discussions between the tribe and the county thus far have produced a draft agreement that citizens and tribal members may examine to provide input to the county and the tribe."

Wyrick will review the public comment before making a final recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners, which must approve the agreement in the form of a "Memorandum of Understanding." Approval would require formal action in a public meeting of the board.

Visit the county web site at www.clark.wa.gov/general/commiss.htm to view the draft agreement. Copies also are available from the Commissioners Office at 1300 Franklin St., Vancouver, (360) 397-2232. Written comments may be submitted to the Commissioners Office or transmitted by e-mail to Boardcom@clark.wa.gov.

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